

## Long-Term Care Survey Alert

### Staff Health : Caregivers: Shed Excess Pounds for Good With This Simple Plan

Try these 2 simple strategies in lieu of counting calories.

Between the stress of making sure residents always get the care they need -- and the boxes of doughnuts and candy that grateful families bring to the unit -- caregivers can all too easily consume too much food.

In fact, many people become overweight by adding a few pounds a year until a decade down the road, they have a disheartening amount of pounds to lose. Yet people who lose weight should do so slowly, says **Sarah-Jane Bedwell, RD, LDN**, a nutritional specialist in Nashville, Tenn.

First steps: Eat regularly to avoid slowing down your metabolism, advises Bedwell. Also, "people who are overly hungry when they do eat tend to overeat or make poor choices, leading to more weight gain."

Also think of your plate as having four sections, advises Bedwell. "One fourth of it should have a lean meat, one fourth some sort of starch (preferably a complex carbohydrate), and the rest vegetables and fruits." Yet "most of the time, people's plates are filled with one half meat and one half starch with a little garnish of vegetables," she notes.

Remember this formula: "To lose one pound, you have to have a deficit of 3,500 calories," explains Bedwell. And that "boils down to decreasing your calorie intake by 500 calories a day," which sounds like a lot, she admits. "But if you exercise 25 minutes, that's about 250 calories," says Bedwell. You can eliminate the other 250 calories by foregoing a 16-ounce soft drink, two cookies, or half a portion of French fries, as examples, she adds. "The next thing you know, you are losing a pound a week."

Eating more fiber can also ramp up weight loss. Fiber "is a natural appetite suppressant," helping "you feel fuller longer," says Bedwell. (Fiber can also lower your cholesterol, she adds.)

To get enough fiber, people should eat natural sources such as whole grains, fruits and vegetables, advises Bedwell. "You should shoot for 25 to 35 grams of fiber [a day] but get there slowly in order to avoid GI distress from the additional fiber."